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POLITBURO IMAGES OF STALIN

By NATHAN LEITES, ELSA BERNAUT,
and RAYMOND L. GARTHOFF*

HYPOTHESES regarding differences (or lack of differences) in policy-orientation or in degrees of influence between the various members of the Soviet Politburo have always been of great interest to students of politics. Thus there have been frequent speculations regarding alleged differences in foreign policy lines and on the problem of succession. The absence of confirming or disconfirming data for any of these hypotheses is striking, and obvious in view of the secrecy that enshrouds the internal operations of the Politburo. Published statements of any kind by members of the Politburo have become infrequent in recent years. Such statements as are available for analysis have usually dealt with different subjects and have been made at different dates, so that they were difficult to compare from the point of view of testing hypotheses regarding differences in policy of influence. Through Stalin's seventieth birthday, December 21, 1949, however, a rare opportunity for comparative analysis did occur. *Pravda* published articles by Politburo members Malenkov, Molotov, Beria, Voroshilov, Mikoyan, Kaganovich, Bulganin, Andreyev, Khrushchëv, Kosygin, and Shvernik (in this order), preceded by a joint message to Stalin from the Central Committee of the Party and the Council of Ministers of the U.S.S.R. These articles were reprinted in *Bolshevik*, the Party organ, and the Soviet press in general.¹ In addition, the anniversary issue of *Pravda* (but not *Bolshevik*) contained two articles on Stalin by persons who are not members of the Politburo, M. Shkiryatov (a Party Secretary) and A. Poskreby-

* The authors are indebted to Hans Speier, Victor M. Hunt, and Joseph M. Goldsen for a number of points and formulations.

¹ As far as is feasible, quotations are given from the translations in Volume I, No. 52, of *The Current Digest of the Soviet Press* (hereafter cited as *Digest*). Other passages have been translated from December 1949, No. 24, *Bolshevik*. All italics, unless otherwise indicated, are by the authors of this paper.

shev (presumably Stalin's personal secretary), thus treating their statements on a par with those made by the members of the Politburo. This body of materials will be examined as to what it may reveal regarding the distribution of influence and attitudes within the Politburo.

While all the statements mentioned appear at first glance to express the same adulation of Stalin, they do contain nuances in style and emphasis. These nuances could more easily be dismissed as matters of individual rhetoric, of little relevance to political analysis, if the statements had been made by Western statesmen. But nuances in the political language used by members of the Politburo when talking about Stalin are of a different nature. Stalinism is not afraid of monotony and does not shun repetitiveness. Lack of complete uniformity of language is therefore possibly of political interest. It is worth while to examine the materials intensively in order to determine whether or not the differences in language, however subtle, fall into any patterns, and to explore the meaning of differentiations between groups or individuals in the Politburo. It seemed especially useful to approach the material with a view to investigating the degree of maintenance (or disuse and replacement) of earlier Bolshevik terms and themes.

Two major types of statements about the image of Stalin which can be discerned in the articles are analyzed in this paper. The accompanying table gives the total frequencies of statements² concerning these ideas: first, Stalin in comparison to Lenin; and second, characterizations of Stalin's dominant role, as "perfect Bolshevik" or "ideal Father." A third image, "Stalin" as person or symbol, is not presented in this table or discussed in detail because the difference between images is a more qualitative classification derived from analysis of the context within the articles; it is briefly discussed at the close of this article.

The frequencies of statements, when read across, indicate the weight within an article given by the Politburo member to the "Bolshevik image" relative to the weight given to the

² A "statement," for the purposes of this table, means each incidence of an explicit idea, and may vary from a phrase to a paragraph. The examples cited in the text should clarify this point.

"popular image" of Stalin.³ The articles were not uniform in length: Malenkov's article was approximately 3,500 words; those of Shvernik, Andreyev, Kosygin, Khrushchëv, and Shkiryatov were each about 2,500 words; the others were each approximately 5,000 words. However, since the relative weight given to characterizations within each article is the subject of our attention here, no "weighing" of frequencies has been made in the table, and absolute figures have been used.

TABLE I

REFERENCES TO STALIN IN THE BIRTHDAY SPEECHES OF
DECEMBER 21, 1949

| POLITBURO MEMBER | STALIN: LENIN'S PUPIL OR EQUAL? | | | STALIN: PERFECT BOLSHEVIK OR IDEAL FATHER? | | |
|---------------------|------------------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|
| | <i>Bolshevik Image</i> | <i>Ambiguous Image</i> | <i>Popular Image</i> | <i>Bolshevik Image</i> | <i>Ambiguous Image</i> | <i>Popular Image</i> |
| Molotov | 5 | 1 | 0 | 12 | 3 | 0 |
| Malenkov | 4 | 0 | 2 | 11 | 3 | 0 |
| Beria | 13 | 3 | 1 | 15 | 1 | 2 |
| Shvernik | 4 | 0 | 5 | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| Voroshilov | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 4 |
| Mikoyan | 2 | 2 | 9 | 3 | 0 | 5 |
| Andreyev | 1 | 0 | 2 | 3 | 0 | 15 |
| Bulganin | 0 | 1 | 6 | 0 | 0 | 3 |
| Kosygin | 1 | 0 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 8 |
| Khrushchëv | 0 | 1 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 7 |
| Kaganovich | 0 | 3 | 6 | 0 | 3 | 21 |
| Shkiryatov | 0 | 3 | 6 | 0 | 0 | 6 |
| Poskrebyshev | 2 | 1 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 10 |

The source used in this compilation is *Bolshevik*, No. 24, December 1949.

From this table it is evident that the "top group" (Malenkov, Molotov, and Beria) uses language closer to the older Bolshevik ideology than do the rest; the other two groups use language which resembles more closely that of Soviet synthetic folklore dealing with Stalin.

³ The groupings within the Politburo are self-explanatory; Shkiryatov and Poskrebyshev are separated from the "bottom group" because of their non-Politburo status.

STALIN: LENIN'S PUPIL OR LENIN'S EQUAL?

In current Soviet public discourse, the "great" Lenin is not called "greater" than the "great" Stalin; nor is it affirmed explicitly that Lenin and Stalin are equal in "greatness." It is, however, possible to adopt formulations that suggest the former or the latter of these emphases.

In the articles on Stalin's birthday, the differences of stress fall into the pattern of tendencies toward what we have termed the "popular" and the "Bolshevik" images of Stalin; the popular image emphasizes Stalin's equality (and in some instances even primacy) in relation to Lenin, while the Bolshevik image lays more stress on Stalin as Lenin's "pupil," or the "continuer" of his work and ideas.⁴

In the treatment of this point, the Bolshevik image characterizes the articles of the top group of the Politburo—Malenkov, Molotov, and Beria. In a "middle" position, using both images, are the joint article of the Central Committee and the Council of Ministers and Shvernik's article. Tendencies toward the popular image are expressed by Kosygin and Voroshilov (each of whom makes only two comparisons), Andreyev, and Poskrebyshev. The popular image is most frequently and clearly presented by Mikoyan, Kaganovich, Bulganin, Khrushchëv, and Shkiryatov.

Beria uses the Bolshevik image, illustrated in the following examples, most frequently:

Even during Lenin's lifetime and under his leadership . . . Comrade Stalin emerged as Lenin's closest pupil, the most loyal of his followers and as the greatest theoretician, organizer and builder of our party after Lenin. [Digest, p. 11.]

From his first steps of revolutionary activity Comrade Stalin stood unwaveringly under Lenin's banner. He was Lenin's true and devoted follower. He made his extremely valuable contributions to Leninist development of the Marxist Party's . . . tenets. [Digest, p. 12.]

Establishing and developing Leninism and relying on Lenin's instructions [ukazaniya], Comrade Stalin developed the tenets of . . . industrialization. [Digest, p. 12.]

⁴ The longest *Pravda* article on the occasion of Stalin's fiftieth birthday, December 21, 1929, was by Stalin's old friend and later victim, Abel Yenukidze. Instead of presenting the couple Lenin-Stalin, he told about the activities of Stalin-Yenukidze. As to Stalin himself, Yenukidze said: "It is difficult to write about him. He always was, and will remain to the end of his life, a real Bolshevik."

There are other instances where Beria states that "Comrade Stalin developed *Lenin's instructions*" (*Digest*, p. 13) and "developed *Lenin's teaching on the Party*" (*Digest*, p. 12), but this quotation is especially significant since Stalin is in Soviet writing almost universally credited with the decision to collectivize and industrialize the country at a rapid tempo. There are many other references to Stalin's "arming the Party with Leninism," or "defending" or "advancing" Leninism, but these are not real comparisons.

There is one statement of equality on a situation (the conduct of the Civil War) concerning which Stalin has credited himself with a role possibly higher than Lenin's, so that equality in this respect would belong to the Bolshevik image.⁵

During the difficult Civil War years *Lenin and Stalin* led the Party, the State, the Red Army and the country's entire defense. [*Digest*, p. 12.]

Beria even makes one statement about "the introduction of the *Leninist-Stalinist national policy*" (*Digest*, p. 13) dealing with the one matter attributed to Stalin's own authorship prior to the middle twenties.

Beria also mentions Stalin's investiture by Lenin—a theme that is rarely touched upon:

Lenin proposed that the Central Committee of the Party elect Comrade Stalin General Secretary of the Central Committee. Comrade Stalin has been working in this high post since April 3, 1922. [*Digest*, p. 12.]

As Lenin proposed, in 1923, that the Party consider the "removal" of Stalin from this "high post," Beria's reference is unusual. (So are references to any date, in the statements here analyzed, except the dates of the revolution, of the beginning and the end of the past war, and of some of Stalin's writings.)

Beria also makes two statements less clearly expressive of this image, in one of which he praises Stalin's Bolshevik virtues, thrice interjecting "like Lenin" (*Digest*, p. 15), and in the other of which Stalin joins Marx, Engels, and Lenin "among the names of the greatest geniuses of mankind" (*Digest*, p. 11).

⁵ Stalin, in a letter published in *Bolshevik*, No. 3, Feb. 1947, said: "Lenin . . . did not consider himself an expert on military affairs not only in the past, before the October Revolution, but even after the October Revolution down to the end of the Civil War. In the Civil War Lenin obliged us, then still young comrades of the

Molotov also expresses the Bolshevik image of Stalin in comparison to Lenin, emphasizing his theoretical continuation rather than personal discipleship, as Beria does. Both mention the fact that after Lenin's death, Stalin headed the Communist Party. Molotov goes on, however, to state:

Comrade Stalin upheld and developed *Lenin's theory* of the possibility of victory of socialism in one country . . . [*Digest*, p. 7.]

. . . the victory of socialism in one country, which was *first* raised by *Lenin* and found a profound scientific basis in the works of Stalin . . . [*Digest*, p. 10.]⁶

As the . . . representative of creative Marxism, Comrade Stalin has highly developed the *Leninist* principles of strategy and tactics of our party . . . [*Digest*, p. 10.]⁷

Molotov also expresses the Bolshevik image of Stalin as the successor to Lenin in his capacity as "head of the Party" and the preserver of its monolithic character, and says:

As the great *continuer* of the *cause* of immortal Lenin, Comrade Stalin stands at the *head* of all our socialist construction . . . [*Bolshevik*, p. 22.]

Similarly he describes how "*Stalin and the Stalinist leadership*" kept the Soviet people "on the path indicated by the great *Lenin*" (*Digest*, p. 6), and how Stalin, as Party chief, overcame "anti-Leninist vacillations" (*Digest*, p. 7). (The term "anti-Stalinist" is not even found in the popular image; it is too strong.)

Malenkov also stresses the Bolshevik image (despite two statements of apparent equality concerning their role in the Revolution).

Central Committee, 'to study military affairs precisely.' As to himself, he frankly told us that it was already too late for him . . ." (P. 3.)

⁶ When Stalin put forward this new position in the middle twenties, it was, of course, necessary for him to present it as one already taken by Lenin. The top group in the Politburo preserves this line after a quarter of a century; the others do not deny it but stress it less and even tend to imply Stalin's creativeness in this matter.

⁷ December 21, 1929, Molotov wrote more specifically that Stalin had been a "man of practice" (*praktik i organizator*) up to Lenin's death, after which he became a "theoretician." Even in 1949 Molotov has not quite surpressed his tendency to deny that Stalin was manifestly perfect from the start. He begins his speech by saying: "It is *now* particularly clear how very fortunate it was . . . that after Lenin the Communist Party of the USSR was headed by Comrade Stalin." (*Digest*, p. 6.) In the Bolshevik atmosphere of veiled language, this is bound to be understood, to some extent, as conveying: It was not *always* clear.

He [Stalin] has defended and developed *the Leninist theory* of the possibility of socialism in one country. [*Digest*, p. 3.]

Better than anyone else, Comrade Stalin profoundly *understood Lenin's* inspired *ideas* on a new-type Marxist party. [*Digest*, p. 3.]

A middle position, using both images frequently, is noticeable in the joint C.C.-Council of Ministers message, and in the article by Shvernik, entitled "Comrade Stalin—*Continuer* of the Great *Cause* of Lenin."

In addition to the title of his article, Shvernik makes three weaker Bolshevik image references to Lenin and Stalin, such as the one cited below.

From the first steps of his revolutionary struggle, Comrade Stalin was pervaded with a boundless faith in *Leninist* genius, and went on Lenin's path as the most loyal of his *pupils* and companions-in-arms. [*Bolshevik*, p. 91.]

On the other hand, he expresses the popular image four times, writing "together with Lenin, Comrade Stalin" (*Bolshevik*, p. 91, twice), and "Lenin and Stalin" led the working-class to victory (*Bolshevik*, p. 91), and finally, in words borrowed from Mikoyan, he says: "Stalin—that is Lenin today" (*Bolshevik*, p. 95).

Poskrebyshv (Stalin's secretary, and possibly a future member of the Politburo) also expresses a mixed attitude on this question, with three unequivocal statements of equality, three as "continuer of the cause of Lenin," and two as teacher-pupil.

Kosygin, Andreyev, and Voroshilov employ the popular image more frequently than the Bolshevik but do not compare Lenin and Stalin often. Thus Kosygin writes: "The ideas of *Lenin-Stalin* have triumphed. One-third of the population of the globe has entered firmly onto the path indicated by *Lenin-Stalin* . . ." (*Bolshevik*, p. 89), and later "path of socialism, indicated by *Lenin-Stalin*" (*Bolshevik*, p. 90). Kosygin even omits the name of Lenin in a passage where one might have expected to find it:

With the name of Stalin is indissolubly connected the creation of our Communist Party and of the first Soviet socialist state in the world . . . [*Bolshevik*, p. 86.]

Andreyev employs the Bolshevik image in one passage but

uses the popular one in his other two comparisons (and in other ways). Thus:

The great Lenin charted the basic means of putting the peasantry on the path of socialist construction . . . Comrade Stalin brilliantly worked out this plan and put it into practice. [*Digest*, p. 28.]

But:

The Bolshevik Party, led by *Lenin and Stalin*, carried out the century-old hopes of the village by transferring all the land to peasant use . . . But an *even more profound* revolution was carried out by the Bolshevik Party, *under Comrade Stalin's* leadership, in the collectivization of the countryside . . . [*Digest*, p. 28.]

Just as Andreyev's article was predominantly devoted to agricultural matters, Voroshilov's article was concerned with military affairs, more specifically the strategy and conduct of the Great Fatherland War.

In addition to two references to "the Party of Lenin and Stalin" he makes only one comparison, expressing equality.

During the years of the heroic struggle and labor [the Revolution], the Soviet people under the leadership of the Party of Bolsheviks, under the guidance of the great leaders *Lenin and Stalin*, secured a world-historical victory. [*Bolshevik*, p. 35.]

The popular image is clearly dominant, and frequent, in the articles of Mikoyan, Kaganovich, Bulganin, Khrushchëv, and Shkiryatov.

Thus Mikoyan states:

Stalin not only fully mastered the entire scientific heritage of Marx, Engels and Lenin . . . [he "defended" and "brilliantly interpreted" it]; he also enriched Marxism-Leninism with a number of great discoveries, and further developed the Marxist-Leninist theory. In the words of Comrade Stalin Leninism is raised to a new, *higher* historical plane . . . The Marxist-Leninist philosophy, which is transforming the world, has reached its *apex* in the works of Comrade Stalin. [*Digest*, p. 19.]⁸

Kaganovich is even more devoted to the use of the popular image, representing Stalin as equal to (or in rare instances even superior to) Lenin. There are no clear uses of the Bolshevik image in his article, which abounds in comparisons.

⁸ Although Molotov and Beria both praise Stalin as the theorist, they do not state explicitly (or clearly implicitly) that Stalin is as great a theorist as Lenin, to say nothing of the statement that "Marxist-Leninist philosophy has reached its apex" in Stalin's work.

Comrade Stalin did not *simply* defend and safeguard the Leninist theory of the possibility of the victory of socialism in one country, but on the foundation of rich experience of the struggle, he *creatively augmented* and *enriched* the theory . . . [*Bolshevik*, p. 59.]

In one place Bulganin credits Stalin with the distinction between just and unjust wars ("as Stalin teaches . . ."), without any mention of Lenin, who first made this distinction, and until now has been generally so credited in the Soviet Union. (*Bolshevik*, p. 70.)

Khrushchëv also uses the popular image, with one possible exception, in all his comparisons of Lenin and Stalin. In addition to five references to "the x of Lenin and Stalin" (x = Party, teaching, idea, cause, and banner), he makes three statements of clear equality and one which may even attribute superiority to Stalin.

Herein lies Comrade Stalin's tremendous and invaluable service. He is the true friend and *comrade-in-arms* of the great Lenin. [*Digest*, p. 30.] . . . Stalin, who *together with Lenin* created the great Bolshevik Party, our socialist state, *enriched* Marxist-Leninist theory, and *raised it* to a new, *higher* level. [*Bolshevik*, p. 80.]

Shkiryatov also expresses the extreme image most frequently, stating only three times that Stalin is continuing the "cause" or "banner" of Lenin, while using the phrase "the teaching of Lenin and Stalin" four times, and making six comparisons of Lenin and Stalin, in all of which they are clearly represented as equal.

Reviewing the treatment of this theme we see that there emerge rather distinctly a Bolshevik image and a popular image, in the treatment of the relative standing of Lenin and Stalin by Politburo members.

The "Bolshevik image" is most prominent in the articles of the top sector—Beria, Molotov, and Malenkov (in that order). It represents Stalin as the pupil of Lenin, his follower, and his continuer; as Lenin's successor, who continued to implement, defend, and elaborate Leninism. He appears as the most loyal of Lenin's followers and the one who best understood his ideas. Stalin is not considered as Lenin's peer (with the single exception of Malenkov's treatment of the October Revolution).

The "popular image" of Stalin is predominant, in varying

degree, in the words of all the others, especially Kaganovich, Khrushchëv, Mikoyan, Bulganin, and Shkiryatov. It represents Stalin as the equal of Lenin, also in situations where this was obviously not the case. In rare instances, Stalin even appears greater than Lenin.

STALIN: THE PERFECT BOLSHEVIK PARTY LEADER, OR THE IDEAL FATHER

The Bolshevik image is employed by Beria, Malenkov, Molotov, and to a lesser degree by Shvernik and Mikoyan. Stalin appears as the great "leader" and "teacher," but by implication the Party is superior to him. He possesses a very high degree of Bolshevik virtues.

The perfect Bolshevik takes it for granted that his life is dedicated to the advancement of Communism, at whatever deprivations to himself. He regards it as improper to talk about ultimate values and personal sacrifices; attention, he feels, should be concentrated on discerning the correct line and carrying it through. The traits ascribed to Stalin by Beria, for instance, are almost all means to this end and are presented as such. A positive evaluation of a Bolshevik commends him for having made himself an effective tool in correct directions.

The popular image of Stalin—given much more profusely—does not present him as a Party leader impersonally fulfilling the moral obligation to render service to the proletariat by providing a correct policy line. It shows him as a People's Leader in the Soviet Union and in the rest of the world, bestowing boundless paternal solicitude (*zabota*) on the "simple people." The people, overwhelmed by surprise at finding such freely tendered goodness in one of their very own (*rodnoi*) on high, work harder and better for him in loving gratitude. While the aim of the Party leader is to realize communism in the future, at the cost of current hardships, the solicitude of the Leader of the People aims at satisfying human needs now. This he does, not only by laying down over-all policy, but also by innumerable concrete actions. In all this, Stalin possesses the virtues of an ideal father (sometimes brother and friend) which his children do not strive to equal. Stalin tends to become the creator of all good things.

The use of the Bolshevik image by the top group in this respect is far from excluding the use of elements of the popular image. Nevertheless, there is a differentiation, which we shall endeavor to show.

1. One of the aspects of the Bolshevik image of Stalin is his endowment with a very high degree of Bolshevik virtues. The implication is that these distinctive virtues should be emulated by less perfect Bolsheviks and that, although the chances of attaining Stalin's degree of perfection are slight, the model is clear, and there is no predetermined limit to advance.⁹

For example, Beria says:

Comrade Stalin's whole life and work are a great *inspiring example* of fidelity to Leninism and unbounded love of Lenin, an example of self-sacrificing service to the working class and to all working people, to the cause of freeing humanity from oppression and exploitation. [*Digest*, p. 16.]

Our leader's genius is combined with his simplicity and modesty, with an extraordinary personal charm, with implacability toward the enemies of communism, with considerateness and paternal concern for individuals. He possesses extreme clarity of thought, calm greatness of character, scorn and intolerance of all boastfulness and outward effect. [*Digest*, p. 16.]¹⁰

In Comrade Stalin the Soviet people saw even more clearly and distinctly the features of his great teacher, Lenin. They saw that our army and people were led into battle against a brutalized enemy by a tested leader who, like Lenin, was fearless in battle and merciless toward the enemies of the people; like Lenin, free of any semblance of panic; like Lenin, wise and bold in deciding complicated questions; like Lenin, clear and definite, just and honorable, loving his people as Lenin loved them. [*Digest*, p. 15.]¹¹

⁹ On the other hand, when someone who exhibits a predilection for the popular image attributes to him Bolshevik traits, there is often an allusion to the impossibility of imitation. Thus Mikoyan says: "The power of Stalinist [Stalin's] foresight of revolutionary events is *most uncommon*, and is one of the basic qualities of our great leader." (*Bolshevik*, p. 46.) "*It is impossible not to wonder at the wise patience, the temperance and the inimitable endurance and boldness displayed by Comrade Stalin in his appraisal of facts and events . . .*" (*Digest*, p. 20.) There is, for those accustomed to older Bolshevik language, a jarring note in the juxtaposition of the classical Bolshevik stress on "the appraisal of facts and events" with largely non-Bolshevik virtue-words.

¹⁰ "Extraordinary personal charm" belongs to neither the Bolshevik nor the popular images. "Considerateness" (*chutkost'*) (the *Digest's* translation of this word has been altered) and paternal solicitude (*otecheskaya zabota*) are popular image traits.

¹¹ "Loving his people" also belongs to the popular image. These occasional popular image terms in a moderate picture may be the effect of reverse seepage of exoteric propaganda into the constantly assaulted esoteric integrity of the top group.

Molotov also stresses Stalin's Bolshevik traits in several passages, some outstanding examples of which follow below.

The works of Stalin are now appearing, containing his works from 1901. It is impossible to overestimate the theoretical and political significance of this publication. Before our eyes, stage by stage, there unfolds the picture of the inspired creative work of the great Stalin, in all its diversity and spiritual wealth. Here all the diverse practical questions of the work of the Bolshevik party and the international communist movement and, together with this, complex scientific problems of history and philosophy, are treated in the light of the ideas of Marxism-Leninism . . . [*Digest*, p. 9.] A profound knowledge of the history of nations, the versatile experience of leader of the international Communist movement, the ability to fathom and to discern in time the strategic plans and tactics of individual states, the boldness and flexibility of decisions in complicated international affairs, which are so characteristic of Comrade Stalin, determined the decisive successes of the foreign policy of the Soviet Union. [*Digest*, p. 8.]

In most cases, popular image characterizations are admixed with Bolshevik statements showing Stalin as "leader" and "teacher." Of all the statements by the top group in the popular vein, only one (by Molotov) communicates a feeling or judgment by the speaker himself; all the other instances allege judgments or feelings of the *people*.

Comrade Stalin is rightfully considered a great and loyal friend of the freedom-loving peoples of the countries of people's democracy . . . [*Digest*, p. 3.]

That is why the peoples of the Soviet Union and the whole of progressive mankind see in the person of Comrade Stalin their recognized leader and teacher. That is why today they express their love and devotion to Comrade Stalin with especial warmth, take note of his great services in the struggle for happy lives for the people for peace among nations. [*Digest*, p. 3.]

In addition to stressing his Bolshevik virtues, the Bolshevik image presents Stalin as leader in three forms: political strategist, teacher, and Party executive. We shall examine these in turn.

2. According to the Bolshevik image, Stalin's main role is to make a diagnosis and prognosis of the political situation and to derive the correct line from it. In the popular image of Stalin this is stressed much less. This aspect of the Bolshevik image is conveyed particularly by Molotov, as the examples below indicate.

... [Stalin's] ability ... to show the Party the true way and to lead it to victory. [*Digest*, p. 11.]

In order that the anti-Hitler three-power coalition might be created during the war, it was necessary first to thwart the anti-Soviet plans of the governments of Britain, France ... Comrade Stalin discerned in time the ... Anglo-French intrigues ... enabling us ... to bring the developments of events to a point at which the governments of Britain and the U.S.A. were faced with the necessity of establishing an Anglo-Soviet-American ... coalition ... [*Digest*, p. 8.]

3. Related to this in the Bolshevik image is Stalin's function in "teaching" the Party rules of organization, strategy, and tactics. This is another point less stressed in the popular image of Stalin. But it is one of the main emphases of Malenkov (who may expect to take over this function). The following citations from his speech are but a few of many.

Comrade Stalin *teaches* that the Bolshevik Party is strong because ... it multiplies its ties with the broad masses of the workers. [*Digest*, p. 4.]

Comrade Stalin *teaches* that without self-criticism we cannot advance ...

Comrade Stalin *teaches* that ... Comrade Stalin *teaches* that ... Comrade Stalin *teaches* that ... [*Digest*, pp. 4-5.]

Comrade Stalin *educates* the cadres of our Party ... [*Digest*, p. 5.]

Comrade Stalin constantly *warns* that not conceit but modesty adorns a Bolshevik ... [*Digest*, p. 5.]

Molotov and Beria emphasize Stalin's character as the "continuer," "defender," and "developer" of Leninism more than this teaching role, but they often do refer to Stalin as "leader and teacher." (This standard phrase is also found in the popular image, but less frequently and prominently.)

4. The top-level statements frequently present as the major acting force not Stalin but the Party (or, sometimes, the "Soviet Union," or the "Soviet people"), while other members of the Politburo stress the personal role of Stalin by omitting references to the Party. The Party is even credited with those services most often credited to Stalin by most of the others—inspiring, mobilizing, organizing. The term "leadership of the Party" clearly refers to others besides Stalin—in fact, to the speaker himself. Thus in the following passage, Malenkov mentions the Party eight times, and Stalin only once.

The friendship among peoples which is firmly established in our country is a great *achievement of the leadership* of the Bolshevik Party. Only the

Bolshevist *Party* could forge the indissoluble fraternity among the peoples—the Bolshevik *Party* which consistently carries forward the ideas of internationalism . . . [The recent war] was a most serious one for the Bolshevik *Party* itself. The *Party* emerged from this test a great victor . . . following the instructions of Comrade Stalin, our *Party* constantly inspired the people and mobilized their efforts in the struggle against the enemy. The *Party's* organizational work united and directed . . . Again the unsurpassed ability of the Bolshevik *Party* to mobilize the masses under the most difficult conditions was demonstrated. [*Digest*, p. 4.]

On the other hand, the image of Stalin as the People's Leader (the popular image) shows him acting directly, without using the transmission belt of the Party. Occasionally the "top-group" and the "middle-group" members use this image in topics intended for mass consumption:

All who desire to fight against the instigators of a new war know . . . that they will not err in rallying around Comrade Stalin . . . [*Molotov, Digest*, p. 3.]

. . . Stalin's voice in defense of peace . . . has penetrated throughout the world . . . *All simple and honest people* responding to his appeal group themselves into powerful columns of fighters for peace. [*Voroshilov, Digest*, p. 19; *Bolshevik*, p. 44.]

The popular image of Stalin, as we have indicated previously, does not stop at the limits which mark the Bolshevik characterization described above. Indeed, it very rarely uses them at all, except for casual and occasional reference to the standard term "leader" and "teacher."

The articles of Kaganovich, Khrushchëv, Shkiryatov, Poskrebyshv, Bulganin, Kosygin, and Andreyev, in roughly that descending order, are most expressive of the popular image, in the aspects presently under review. Mikoyan and to a lesser degree Shvernik also use it, but there are a number of mixed and even Bolshevik statements in their articles. On the other hand, the seven writers listed above have only four Bolshevik image statements in all their articles. Voroshilov is a special case; in his introduction and conclusion he makes a number of statements in the popular image.

1. In the popular image Stalin is characterized as the "father" of his people, who constantly helps them because of his "paternal solicitude" for them.¹² (This is sometimes weak-

¹² The extent to which this is a reversion (presumably not very conscious) to the pre-Revolutionary mass image of the Tsar as the "little father" of his people, who helps them *despite* his bureaucracy, will not be discussed here.

ened to a "friend" relationship, and sometimes intimate relationship terms are not employed.) "The simple people" are grateful, loving, and industrious in return. For them Stalin is *rodnoi*, meaning "one's very own," and connoting familial intimacy.

Each of the members of the "bottom group" uses this description (to varying degrees, of course, as shall become evident). The following examples are by no means exhaustive of the instances used.

Kaganovich depicts Stalin in this manner in the following passages:

Comrade Stalin displays *exceptional solicitude* regarding miners and the alleviation of their labor . . . The glorious army of railway workers responds to Comrade Stalin with *warm love, devotion*, and with a growing and improving transport [system] for his *paternal warmth and solicitude* . . . The systematic increase of wages [etc.] . . . all these are the results of the *constant solicitude and attention of our very own [rodnoi]* Comrade Stalin, whom the people *lovingly call father and friend*. [*Bolshevik*, pp. 60-61.]

. . . all the toiling people of our Motherland, *with all its heart, warmly love* and praise Comrade Stalin for the fact that *he is always with the working class, always with the people*, at the head of the people both in *its hardest hour [tyazhkaya godina]*, in days of great difficulties, trials and sufferings, and in the days of joy and victory. [*Bolshevik*, p. 56.]

Bulganin develops a similar image:

Comrade Stalin *always* displayed and displays up to the present time a *constant paternal solicitude* for the *bringing up* [*vyrashchivani*; used in the phrase "bringing up one's children"] of military cadres, *educating* them in the spirit of supreme fidelity to the Bolshevik Party, in the spirit of self-sacrifice in the service of the people . . . [*Bolshevik*, p. 67.]

Khrushchëv similarly states:

Lenin and Stalin stood at the *cradle* of each Soviet republic, they guarded it from menacing dangers, *paternally* [*po-otcheski*] helped it to *grow* and become strong . . . This is why all the peoples of our land, with the uncommon *warmth and feeling of filial love*, call the great Stalin *their very own [rodnoi] father* . . . [*Bolshevik*, p. 81.]

Today the peoples of the great Soviet Union and all advanced progressive humanity *from their heart salute their very own [rodnoi]* Comrade Stalin . . . Praise to *our very own father*, wise teacher, gifted leader . . . [*Bolshevik*, p. 85.]

Andreyev, while not stressing this aspect of the extreme image, states:

Attentively, paternally, daily leading and watching over affairs on the collective farms . . . [is] Comrade Stalin. [Digest, p. 29.]

The two non-Politburo members, Shkiryatov and Poskrebyshv, both use this aspect of the popular image frequently. Poskrebyshv even titled his article "*Beloved Father and Great Teacher.*"

Shkiryatov writes:

The peoples of our country grow and become stronger like one *family*, and glorify Comrade Stalin—*father and friend* of all peoples of the USSR. [*Pravda*, p. 11.]

Stalin, our *father and friend*, instills in us a love for all that is *ours, native*—in science, in culture, in production, and *educates* into the Soviet people a *warm devotion* to its Motherland . . . [*Pravda*, p. 11.]

2. As has already become evident, the popular image pictures Stalin as the People's Leader, as contrasted to the emphasis on the Party and Stalin as Party leader in the moderate view. There are several aspects to being "People's Leader," and one which has been suggested in several of the quotations already cited shows Stalin as an opponent of "bureaucracy." In his concern for the welfare of the simple people, he must overcome the inefficiency, selfishness, and malice of the bureaus standing between him and the people. Bulganin makes this almost explicit:

Comrade Stalin always paid great attention to the welfare of soldiers and sailors. He was interested in food standards, the quality of uniforms, and the weight of arms carried by soldiers. Comrade Stalin frequently pointed out in his orders that concern for the soldiers' . . . welfare was the sacred duty of the commanders, that they must see to it most strictly that soldiers received all the food due under established standards, that the troops were given well-prepared warm meals in good time . . . Due to the constant solicitude of Comrade Stalin for the supplies of the troops our front fighters were well fed and comfortably and warmly clad. [*Digest*, p. 28; *Bolshevik*, p. 71.]

Many other examples could be cited to demonstrate this aspect of the popular image.

The popular image of Stalin shows him, by implication, almost as a one-man Party-government-and-army apparatus. The previous quotations have pointed out this characterization of Stalin in situations where the welfare of the people required it. But this does not exhaust the range of his actions, and

Kaganovich and Bulganin in particular extend Stalin's active personal role to rather extreme lengths. According to Kaganovich:

. . . while . . . the countries of Europe, and the U.S.A., first of all, are slipping toward a crisis, here in the Soviet Union the socialist economy improves constantly . . . We are obliged for this to the superiority of the socialist system of economy, and *above all to Comrade Stalin's great energy, initiative and organizing genius.* [*Digest*, p. 25.]

Further, Stalin's "initiative" was responsible for the development of coal production before the war, and he gave "specific attention" to its restoration afterwards. His "initiative" has "established" new oil districts. He "ascribes particular significance" to ferrous metallurgy, gives "constant attention" to electrification, and "special attention" to the production of the means of production, and

. . . *everybody knows* how high Comrade Stalin has *raised the significance* of transportation as a whole and of rail transport in particular. [*Digest*, pp. 24-25.]

Bulganin concerns himself with Stalin's role during the war, where Stalin performed an apparently prodigious amount of diverse labors constantly. Already in the Civil War,

Comrade Stalin was the creator of the most important . . . strategic plans and the *direct leader* of the decisive battle operations . . . At Tsaritsyn and Perm, at Petrograd and against Denikin, in the West against the Poland of Pans, and in the south against Wrangel—*everywhere* his iron will and military genius secured [*obespechivali*] the victory of Soviet forces. [*Bolshevik*, p. 66.]

And in the recent war,

All operations of the Great Fatherland War were *planned by Comrade Stalin and executed under his guidance.* There was *not a single operation* in the working out of which he did not participate. Before finally approving a plan . . . Comrade Stalin subjected it to thorough analysis and discussion with his closest companions [an unusual statement] . . . Comrade Stalin *personally directed the whole course* of *every operation.* Each day and even several times a day *he verified the fulfillment* of his orders, *gave advice,* and *corrected the decisions* of those in command, if there was need of this. [*Bolshevik*, p. 69.]

Every operation . . . was marked by originality of design and creative uniqueness in execution. *Each time* Comrade Stalin knew how to find methods . . . best corresponding to . . . the situation and . . . unexpected by the adversary. [*Digest*, p. 27.]

Bulganin describes Stalin's wartime habit of "personally visiting the fronts to verify on the spot the preparedness of the armies" (*Digest*, p. 27).

This image of Stalin as omnipresent and competent in every matter—an image never presented by the Politburo top group—is developed to a still further extreme by Poskrebyshhev:

Attentively supervising the work of the leading *Michurinists* [the new geneticists], headed by Comrade Lysenko, Comrade Stalin gave them *daily assistance by his advice and instructions* . . . Comrade Stalin must also be noted as a scientific innovator in specialized branches of science . . . Among the old specialists in agriculture it was considered firmly established that the cultivation of citrus crops could not be extended on a wide scale in the region of the USSR Black Sea coast . . . *Having for many years engaged in the cultivation and study of citrus crops in the region of the Black Sea coast*, Comrade Stalin proved in practice that it is possible to produce types of citrus crops . . . adapted to the climatic conditions of the Black Sea coast . . . *Comrade Stalin's decisive role is well known in the matter of planting eucalyptus trees on the Black Sea coast, cultivating melons in the Moscow region and extending the cultivation of branched wheat.* [*Digest*, p. 34.]

STALIN: PERSON OR SYMBOL?

In our material, "Stalin" often refers to more than the man, J. V. Stalin. The boundary between references to Stalin the person and, as might be said, Stalin the symbol is blurred, probably on purpose. The top group, however, is more careful than the other to distinguish between these two images, and to lay stress on Stalin the person.

One way of indicating that Stalin is being referred to as a symbol is by speaking of his "name," or actually declaring his name to be a "symbol." Thus Beria states in his introductory paragraph:

Since the great Lenin there has been no *name* in the world so dear to the hearts of millions of working people as the *name* of the great leader, Comrade Stalin. [*Digest*, p. 11.]

And Molotov tells us that for "the world movement for peace"

. . . the *name* of Stalin is its great banner. [*Digest*, p. 9.]

Malenkov also states this:

The *name* of Comrade Stalin has long since become a *banner* of peace in the minds of the peoples of all countries. [*Digest*, p. 3.]

Through the voice of Comrade Stalin *the whole of the Soviet people declares* unconditionally that the USSR is against military adventures . . . [*Digest*, p. 4.]

And Bulganin writes:

The *name* of Stalin became for the Soviet troops the *symbol of the greatness of our nation* and its heroism. They went into battle with the slogan: "For Stalin, for the Motherland!" [*Bolshevik*, p. 71.]¹³

Another way of differentiating between Stalin the person and Stalin the symbol is by making explicit the *personal* character of the reference. In the birthday articles, Molotov, Shvernik, and Bulganin use this mode of expression most frequently. Although many other references which do not specify that Stalin the person is meant probably do mean this, the method remains, when used by the top group, an indication of instances where Stalin's personal role is held to be highly significant. Malenkov uses a different method of achieving a similar effect. Although he refers to Stalin an average number of times (average number, 59; Malenkov's total, 60), a disproportionately large number of the references are to the effect that "Stalin teaches that . . ." or "as Stalin said," etc. Consequently, he says relatively less about other accomplishments of Stalin.

A technique used to transform "Stalin" from the person into the symbol is to employ the adjectival form of the word, "Stalinist."¹⁴ The Bolshevik image usually reserves the term "Stalinist" to describe the achievements of Stalin's regime rather than his personal accomplishments. The popular image is, on the whole, lax about this differentiation, and apparently allows personal and impersonal meanings to be given to "Stalinist," as well as to "Stalin."

The proportion of uses by the top group (Molotov, Beria, and Malenkov) of "Stalinist" as meaning "Stalin's" personally is only two out of a total of twenty-seven, in contrast to the very

¹³ These examples were drawn at random from the large number used by the top group.

¹⁴ For analysis of this term, the *Current Digest* translation should not be used, as the Russian *stalinski* is frequently translated by them as "Stalin's" or "Stalin" (Constitution, etc.). The Foreign Languages Publishing House in Moscow also translated this term as "Stalin's" in some instances.

frequent use of the term in this meaning by all the others (excepting only Voroshilov's account of Stalin's role in the recent war). Very often statements are made describing "the Stalinist, Soviet path," "Soviet, Stalinist military science," and the like, inferring clearly that the term in these instances indicates merely "under the present regime" or "in a Bolshevik manner."

The relatively impersonal meaning of the adjective "Stalinist" is particularly evident in such passages as the following. Molotov, affirming that the Soviet Union has gained in strength over the last quarter of a century, says:

This is a very great service of Comrade *Stalin and of Stalinist leadership*.
[*Digest*, p. 6.]

Presumably, "Stalinist leadership" here refers to Party leaders other than Stalin, and becomes a synonym for "Party." This is shown when Kaganovich, in a rare formulation, says:

A decisive condition for the victory of socialism was the incessant struggle of Comrade *Stalin and of the united collective Stalinist leadership . . .* for the realization of the general line of the Party. [*Bolshevik*, p. 63.]

CONCLUSIONS

Two main conclusions emerge from this study of the birthday articles:

1. Despite many individual differences among these articles and despite the variations within each of them, two major images of Stalin may be constructed, toward which each article is oriented to its particular degree. Briefly, these images are Stalin the Party Chief and Stalin the People's Leader. The Party Chief is a very great man; the People's Leader stands higher than any man. The Party Chief is characterized by Bolshevik traits; the People's Leader by constant and boundless solicitude for the welfare of all. We have referred for the sake of brevity to the first as "*the Bolshevik image*," and to the second as "*the popular image*."

2. Three groups within the Politburo can be distinguished in terms of using these images. Malenkov, Molotov, and Beria, who presumably are the most influential members of the Politburo, stress the Bolshevik image of Stalin more than the other members, although indications of the popular image are

not totally absent from their statements. Kaganovich, Bulganin, Khrushchëv, Kosygin, and to a lesser degree Mikoyan and Andreyev, occupy positions near the popular image (as do Shkiryatov and Poskrebyshev). Shvernik and the joint Party-government address occupy a middle position. Voroshilov is a special case, presenting the popular image of Stalin in his introduction and peroration, but a very moderate Bolshevik image in terms of specific military operations (in contrast to Bulganin).

These two images of Stalin can now be reviewed with two questions in mind: (1) To whom is either image addressed? Is there a preferred audience for the popular image and another such audience for the Bolshevik image? (2) What political significance can be attached to the finding that the Bolshevik image is stressed by the "top group" in the Politburo, while the popular image is used most freely by the "bottom group"?

Concerning the first question, it should be remembered that all statements analyzed in this paper were published; they were not made in private. As public statements they were not primarily, or at any rate not exclusively, addressed to Stalin. It is reasonable to assume that the "masses" of the Soviet population were meant to be the consumers of the popular image, whereas the Bolshevik image was offered primarily for adoption by Communists, i.e., a small segment of the population. It is characteristic of Bolshevism, though paradoxical to Western thinking, that the symbols of nearness and intimacy ("father," "solicitude," etc.) appear most frequently in the popular image of Stalin and are stressed for that audience which is far removed from Stalin. Those closer to Stalin politically are permitted to speak of him in terms of lesser personal intimacy ("leader of the party"). This paradox results partly from the merely instrumental use in Bolshevik language of words indicating personal nearness, and partly from the Bolshevik deprecation of such nearness in political relationships. The ideal Party member does not stress any gratification he may derive from intimacy with others, much as he may use such intimacy for political ends.

For this reason it is difficult to answer the second question with certainty. It cannot be ruled out that the Politburo—or a

leading group within it, or Stalin personally—decided to use both images of Stalin in the birthday statements and to adopt a certain distribution of roles among its members in presenting them. (Such a decision may have taken the form of an editorial scrutiny of each statement, in the course of which the differentiation of language was imposed.)

However, the assumption that there was a decision within the Politburo on the use of different images of Stalin does not preclude certain tentative conclusions about the status of the groups within the Politburo. The emphasis on the Bolshevik image by a few members of the Politburo and on the popular image by others not only reflects the Bolshevik evaluation of the Party as distinguished from, and superior to, the masses at large, but also indicates the relative distance of the speakers from Stalin. In the situation under review, it is a privilege for a member of the Politburo to refrain from using the crudest form of adulation, words signifying personal intimacy and emotions; that is, private rather than political words. Given the Bolshevik evaluation of political as against private life, the use of the Bolshevik image indicates higher political status. Hence, a planned distribution of roles in using the two images of Stalin on the occasion of his birthday would still indicate a political stratification of the Politburo, though not necessarily political antagonism within it.

Unless one were to make the somewhat absurd assumption that the roles to be performed on this occasion were distributed by lot, or the improbable assumption that they were assigned for the purpose of concealing the real stratification within the Politburo, those members who stress the Bolshevik image could be assumed to be politically closer to Stalin than those who do not.

The assumption that there had been a decision of some kind on the use of the two images would appear more plausible if either image were used by certain members of the Politburo without the admixture of elements taken from the other. As it is, the difference between the "top group" and the "bottom group" is one of *emphasis* in imagery. For this reason, we are inclined to regard the differentiation of political language discussed in this paper as the result of individual choices rather

than of a central decision. However, in this case we may assume that the stress—whether conscious or not—of any given Politburo member on the one or the other image of Stalin was related to his status in the Politburo in the fashion indicated above.